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ABSTRACT

Eight goals are presented that are intended to provide a framework for the development of adult learning in New York in the next two decades and that are targeted for implementation by the year 2000. Each goal is preceded by background information that also spells out the intent of the goal. Goal 1 formulates the public interest in the various areas of adult learning. Goals 2 and 3 set directions for assuring that learners' needs are met, namely conveniently located learning sites which are an integral part of community life and times for educational activities that accommodate the learners. Goals 4 through 7 provide guidelines for the learning services that will respond to the public interest and meet the learners' needs. These are in regard to (1) encouraging a multiplicity of providers to match diverse needs with appropriate services; (2) providing for adequate information and guidance services to protect the consumer and maximize adult learner awareness of learning opportunities; (3) providing for an enlarged role for consumers in quality control and defining roles of the State, providers of services, and voluntary accrediting and other associations; and (4) providing appropriate assessment procedures for adult learning. Goal 8 and its addendum present the financing arrangements that will enable the other goals to be achieved. (YLB)

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NEW YORK STATE GOALS FOR ADULT LEARNING SERVICES

DECEMBER, 1981

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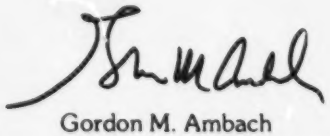
FOREWORD

In my inaugural address in 1977, I focused on the importance of adult learning. The following year, I asked my Advisory Council on Adult Learning Services to develop a set of goals for adult learners. After extensive deliberation, the Council developed draft goals to be implemented by the year 2000. They set the year 2000 as their target date for implementation because they felt that the year 2000 is close enough for people to believe that they can influence events but far enough away to allow time to bring about changes necessary to achieve the goals. The Goals were shared with interested groups and citizens throughout the State. Their comments were considered and many were incorporated into the final document presented to the Board of Regents.

The **Goals for Adult Learning Services** were adopted by the Board of Regents in December, 1981. This Statement provides a framework for the development of adult learning in this State in the next two decades. The Goals represent a challenge to all of us committed to lifelong learning.

Our focus now must be on the steps necessary to implement the Goals. I urge careful attention to the Goals by those who guide the decisions that shape our society - leaders in government, business, industry, labor, the arts and education and call upon them to work in collaboration so that the **New York State Goals for Adult Learning Services** may be achieved.



Gordon M. Ambach
President of The University of
the State of New York and
Commissioner of Education

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NEW YORK STATE GOALS FOR ADULT LEARNING SERVICES BY THE YEAR 2000*

Introduction

It is no secret that we are an aging society. By 2000 our median age will have risen to over 37; it is about 30 at present. We will be older and better educated, we will be living in a world of fewer resources, continuing international conflict and racial animosity. New electronic technology will make profound differences in many aspects of our life. More than half of our jobs will be related very directly to the handling of information and all of us will have to learn how to handle new forms and sources of information.

All of these conditions will create new demands for all adults to learn and keep learning. With fewer young people, and an increasing older population, those in the working age group will have to be highly productive if our standard of living is not to decline sharply. New York State particularly will depend upon the talents of its people for its economic vitality. With all the pressures that we will face as a State and nation, there will be more urgency than ever to eradicate illiteracy, crime, poverty and dependency. We do not claim that education is the panacea for all our problems but we are firmly convinced that education of people of all ages must be a major component of our total national strategy to surmount the challenges that will face our civilization during the rest of this century. It is for that reason that the Board of Regents presents these Goals for Adult Learning Services that are targeted on the year 2000.

Most people associate the Board of Regents with the education of children and youth. Regents examinations and Regents scholarships, actions on schools and colleges are what the public associates with the Regents, yet for many years the Board and the educational and cultural institutions of this State have been serving adults in increasing numbers. Long ago public school districts were encouraged to provide adult education classes. It was in such classes that many adult immigrants got their introduction to American life and learned English. More recently, and as a sign of the advancing levels of adult learning, the Regents established an External Degree Program that was explicity aimed at serving adult learners. That program now serves over 22,000 adults.

Now we take another step in signaling our recognition of adult learning requirements and opportunities at a time when the Federal government is reaffirming the primacy of the states in the field of education. In New York State, the Board of Regents has the constitutional responsibility for all education. We view education for adults as particularly important at this time when we are directing so much of our energy to improving the education of the young because we believe that the environment in which the young learn best is one in which adults are also active learners. We hope, therefore, to see by 2000 the growth of adult learning on a scale that will both parallel and support services for children and youth.

We offer the Goals at this time also because of the growing demand by adults for learning opportunities - itself a response by adults to the recognition that rapidly changing economic and technological conditions make continuing learning essential.

As indications of this growing demand consider these facts:

- The State's schools serve thousands of adult students each year with a wide variety of courses and other learning experiences. In some school districts, adult enrollment exceeds the number of young people in the public schools, and often involves one-third or even one-half of the community's adult population.
- Adults are the new majority on college campuses in New York State, comprising 54% of all participants *(degree credit, non-degree credit, and non-credit)*. One out of every four students pursuing an undergraduate degree in higher education in New York State is 25 or older. Adults comprise more than one-third of the total degree-credit enrollment in the State, when undergraduate and graduate figures are combined.
- BOCES *(Boards of Cooperative Educational Services)* provide vocational and occupational training for 80-90,000 adult New Yorkers every year.
- 22,000 adults throughout the nation are pursuing Regents External degrees offered through the State Education Department.
- 2,000 adults are pursuing college credit through televised courses.
- The State population numbers 18 million, yet almost 30 million visits were made to our museums last year.
- Public libraries are used by 51% of the State's adult population.
- Some 700,000 workers in the State receive training each year directly from their employers.

In presenting the Goals we are cognizant of the national mood regarding the role of government and increases in public expenditures for any purpose. We believe, however, that expanision of adult learning will occur with or without government intervention. The issue is not whether there will be an expansion of adult learning in the years ahead, it is whether that expansion will produce results that will be to the benefit of the society as a whole as well as to individuals and the

**In this statement, "adults" are persons over age 25 or those beyond the age of compulsory schooling who have assumed work, family, or civic roles. "Adult learning services" are any instructional or support services designed to foster systematic learning by adults.*

organizations for which they work, and whether or not there will be equity in the availability of opportunities for learning. In these Goals we seek to define a future for adult learning that will inspire a shared public and private effort. For the State we chart a course for limited and predictable involvement in adult learning. We believe that this course will assure that the public funds needed to achieve the Goals will provide clear public benefits and that the public will continue to be the junior partner in the overall funding of adult learning - the senior partners being adults themselves and their employers.

Developing the Goals

The Goals were originally developed by the Statewide Advisory Council on Adult Learning Services. The Council began work on the Goals in 1978. It set its target for 2000, not only because of the symbolism of that date but because twenty years is close enough for people to believe that they can influence events but far enough in the future to allow time to bring about changes that would be necessary to achieve the Goals. The Council used a planning approach designed to get participants in the process to set goals for the future that they believed could and must be achieved.

After extensive deliberations, the Council shared drafts of the Goals with a broad spectrum of people throughout the State. This effort was conducted as part of an Education Commission of the States *(ESC)* Project on Lifelong Learning funded by the Kellogg Foundation.

After reviewing the comments from the field, the Council submitted the Goals. They were discussed first by the Board of Regents in June 1981. Following that meeting, Commissioner Gordon M. Ambach asked Department staff to prepare the Goals for formal submission to the Board of Regents for adoption. The present draft is based on the work of both the Council and Department staff.

Some steps have already been taken to implement the Goals. In May 1980 the Advisory Council recommended that the State Education Department develop a package of legislation addressed to the most immediate needs of adult learners. Such a packaging of adult-oriented legislation was seen as a desirable step because it offered the opportunity to look at funding for adult services in the same comprehensive way as has regularly been done for elementary, secondary, and higher education legislation.

As a result, six adult learning bills were included in the Regents 1981 Legislative Program. Each bill addressed a specific concern, each proposed a controlled step toward realization of the Goals, and each provided a solid foundation on which to build future legislative agendas.

None of the bills has been enacted to date but the objective of the one dealing with inequities in the treatment of student aid for persons receiving welfare benefits was achieved through court action. The other five, and a new proposal for programs in parent education, will be part of the Regents 1982 program.

In addition, an action plan for implementation of the Goals will be the subject of forthcoming discussions with groups in the field.

NOTE

The Goals are written in the present tense to emphasize that they are to be considered from the perspective of the year 2000. Each Goal is preceded by a needed changes in direction.

The basic question in every case is: What must be done at the State, regional, local and institutional levels to be sure that the Goal is achieved?

I. THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN ADULT LEARNING

"Accelerating change requires that we all become lifelong learners." — Alvin Toffler

Background

There has been a long history of public involvement in the education of adults, beginning in 1777 with the expenditure of public funds to provide instruction in mathematics and military skills to soldiers in the Continental Army. That first public support was characteristic of most of the support that followed at both the Federal and state levels: support was provided to achieve specific public purposes, often only incidentally related to education, as when the G.I. Bill was enacted to ease the transition from war to peace and compensate veterans for their service during wartime, or when funds were provided to improve the quality of police work.

To date there has been no public commitment to the support of adult education in a manner parallel to the commitment to the education of children. In 1978 Congress did adopt a policy which stated, as a national goal: "the availability of appropriate opportunities for lifelong learning for all." Just what that policy means and how the goal should be realized has yet to be worked out. The Federal government does provide funding for various programs that support adult learners and, through the Adult Education Act, focuses very modest resources on those adults having the least level of skills.

In New York State adults who study full-time in degree programs are eligible for the same post-secondary aid as younger students. The State does little, however, for the majority of adult learners who can only study part-time or for those below the collegiate level.

In the latest year for which figures are available, 36% of adults in the State *(age 25 or over)* lacked a high school diploma or equivalent, not including out-of-school youth or illegal immigrants and refugees. Moreover, despite having the nation's largest population of 16-year-and-older persons out of school and without a high school diploma or equivalent, New York State provides less than one percent of the total dollars devoted to helping these people. The United States Department of Education data reveals that the national average of State expenditures for this purpose is $6.55 per person per year. Many states spend considerably more; California spends $35.00, while New York spends only 72 cents.

As indicated above, the demand for adult learning in the State is growing, but the demand comes heavily from those already better educated and well off. Learning opportunities for those who can afford them are available in virtually every subject. However, the adult who cannot pay for education, who wants to learn, and is ready to learn, is more often than not excluded - a situation we now consider intolerable for children and youth.

Moreover, even for those who gain entry to learning opportunities, our educational system is largely youth-oriented. Institutional priorities and procedures are often geared to the young. Service to adults is seldom on the agenda of policymakers. Public policy rarely recognizes and reinforces the importance of adult learning.

But ideas and attitudes are changing. It is now widely recognized that learning by adults is a natural continuation of earlier learning and an integral part of all life experience. Adults learn to achieve various objectives: personal, social, job and career development, preparation for family, work and civic responsibilities, and enjoyment of leisure. Learning helps adults cope with an increasingly complex, crowded and rapidly changing world. Much of this learning is pursued independently and requires little or no outside support; however, most adults, at various times in their lives, have the need for educational services to help acquire specific knowledge and skills. For purposes of institutional organization and public policy, these needs can be classifed as core* and vocational skills, competencies in the liberal arts and sciences ordinarily associated with formal undergraduate education, competencies in specialized fields of knowledge and the professions, and the knowledge and skills for continuing professional and personal development and public service.

While this classification reflects the existing structure of education, it is recognized that there is extensive overlap among the various areas and that no sharp demarcation can be made among the providers of programs. For example, what is a subject of liberal studies for one person may be highly vocationally related for another *(or even for the same person in other circumstances)*. Collegiate institutions offer programs that may be as much vocational as anything offered by a "vocational" school. Because of the diversity of the needs of adults, distinctions inevitably blur. Therefore, within broad categories of institutional missions and program emphasis, determinations of purposes and expected outcomes are best made on an individual basis.

When we look closely at the participants in adult education, we find that the more advantaged a person is, the more likely he or she is to take advantage of further learning opportunties. Education quickens the

**Core skills are the knowledge and skills which the individual needs to function effectively in society as a family member, citizen, worker and learner. Currently, the attainment of a high school diploma or equivalent, including passage of the Regents Competency Tests, is the indication that the core skills have been acquired.*

appetite for more education; "the more, the more" seems to be the pattern of adult learning. This pattern leads to an increasing gap between the well-educated and those left behind.

The public policy dilemma is how to allocate limited public funds among those who most want help and those most in need of help. Fortunately, most adults who want help are able to pay for it and need only limited publicly provided services to get the help they want. The challenge is to assure the availability of basic foundation services *(such as well-supplied public libraries)* while simultaneously helping those who would be left further behind without special encouragement, including financial support.

Goal 1 formulates the public interest in the various areas of adult learning; Goals 2 and 3 set directions for assuring that learners' needs are met; Goals 4 through 7 provide guidelines for the learning services that will respond to the public interest and meet the learners' needs; and Goal 8 and its addendum present the financing arrangements that will enable the other Goals to be achieved.

Goal #1: The Public Interest In Adult Learning in 2000

Public policy assures that learning opportunities are available to all adults regardless of age, sex, physical condition, racial and ethnic background, economic and social status, intellectual ability and learning style. Learning by adults is a natural continuation and an integral part of all life experience. Anyone capable of learning may acquire knowledge and/or skills at whatever pace is appropriate in an environment compatible with individual need and background.

This public policy is reflected in the allocation of public funds for the education of adults and the provision of supporting community services. It assures that adults are actively involved in the planning of learning services and have wide choice of services that best meet their learning needs and styles at each stage of life. Special efforts are made to develop educational opportunities that attract and help those who experience difficulty in learning.

In the area of the core skills it is in the public interest that all adults achieve minimum levels of competency. Opportunity to achieve the core skills is, therefore, provided without charge.

The Board of Regents periodically defines what constitutes the core skills and the standards and measures to be used in assessing their attainment. They make provisions for educational services needed to help attain the core skills and they determine what is to be done to help individuals who cannot achieve minimum levels of competency in the core skills because of handicapping conditions but who want educational or employment opportunities.

In the area of vocational skills it is in the public interest that business and industry have a pool of adequately trained and well educated individuals to meet their needs and to make them better able to compete effectively in national and world markets. To create this pool, various forms of public funding are provided to individuals in need of access to educational, training, retraining and upgrading opportunities in fields in demand by business and industry.

It is also in the public interest to assure that all persons have the opportunity to acquire competencies in the liberal arts and sciences. Arrangements for educational services and financial support assure that these opportunities are available regardless of age, work or family responsibilities, or ability to pay.

In the area of advanced study in graduate or professional programs, the public interest varies depending on the need at particular times for persons with specific knowledge and skills. Public funding is, therefore, provided on a selective basis in accordance with such needs.

In addition to the diploma and degree programs usually associated with core, vocational, baccalaureate and graduate studies, the vitality and quality of life in a State like New York require the availability of a wide array of less formal, usually non-credit, learning opportunities and the library and museum collections to support such learning. The most important public contribution to this availability is the support of such institutions as libraries, museums, public radio and television stations, and other educational and cultural resources. In addition, the public interest may justify support for specific opportunities.

II. WHERE: TOWARDS LEARNING COMMUNITIES

"Not I but the City teaches." — Socrates

Background

For much of American history, learning went on constantly throughout the community: through apprenticeships at shops and stores, in libraries and lyceums, in town meetings and around the stove at the general store, in churches and synagogues, and in families which passed along their culture to each new generation.

In our time, education has come to be encapsuled in special institutions: principally, schools and colleges. Such centralization has served us well over the past hundred years as a system of education for children and youth who can and do spend the better part of their time involved in formal learning. But is not suitable for adults, whose learning must be fitted into busy lives and hectic schedules. For them, learning opportunities must be made much more flexible, convenient, and diverse. For example, many learners, reluctant to face a classroom of younger students or even of other adults, prefer televised or radio courses in the privacy of their own homes. Captioned films are used in the homes by persons with handicapping conditions. Moreover, as the cost of transportation soars, it is likely that more and more would-be learners will find trips to distant sites a financial burden.

Fortunately, learning opportunities are beginning to permeate our communities again as providers seek to attract more students by offering courses in convenient locations in the community. In many areas, increased attention is being given to the provision of public transportation to provide access to needed services. Employers are increasingly providing learning opportunities. New technologies, such as videodiscs, computers and satellite transmission, are being more heavily used to provide information and education to people where they live and work.

A major challenge will be to devise public policies that promote collaboration and resource sharing among providers and that will create an environment for the effective use of new technologies to support learning.

The intention of Goal 2 is to ensure that learning is an integral part of community life; that learning sites are conveniently located and efficiently used; that collaboration is encouraged; and that new learning resources are fully developed.

Goal #2: Learning Communities In 2000

Communities actively encourage learning and use education to enrich the lives of all citizens and help solve community problems. Learning opportunities are provided at many locations to take into account the convenience of learners and the efficient use of all community facilities, including schools, colleges, libraries, museums, shopping centers, work sites and other places where adults congregate. Many providers offer programs in a wide variety of locations and settings; for example, colleges offer programs in high schools, museums, shopping centers, and work places. There is increased sharing of sites; for example, a high school, a college, a BOCES, and a health service, all offer programs at a public library or community center. Support services, such as childcare, counseling, and health and social services are also offered at many learning locations. Increased public transportation facilitates access in both urban and rural areas.

The home is an increasingly important learning site, and there is increased attention to the family as a learning unit. Through various media, including computers and television, information and instructional programs are available at home and work. Public policy encourages the use of media to support learning.

III. WHEN: ACCOMMODATING LEARNERS

"The readiness is all." — Shakespeare

Background

Many adults find that problems of timing, convenience, and scheduling often block them from learning. "Home responsibilities, inconvenience of class schedule and cost of tuition are the barriers to participation named by the largest number of adults," according to a survey of **Needs and Interests of New York State Adults** conducted by Cornell University for the State Education Department.

Many adults overcome these problems by studying part-time. Indeed, most of the part-time students on the college campuses today - and their numbers are burgeoning - are adults. These part-time students are likely to be older than full-time students; to be women and minority group members; to be academically good students; and to be employed.

Responding to these students' needs, many schools, BOCES, colleges, libraries, and other agencies throughout the State now offer programs at convenient and flexible times. Courses are offered in the evenings or on weekends, or on-site sessions are minimized and combined to save time. Employers allow and encourage study on "company" time. Courses by television and by correspondence permit thousands of students to participate without leaving home. Some institutions will admit students at any point for short courses or self-paced instructional programs in which the student does not have to fit into an on-going class.

But there is still much that could be done to make learning more accessible and convenient for adults. Today, most educational activities are still scheduled at the convenience of the institution and its staff. Adjustments are made sometimes to meet the special needs of adults, including disabled persons, but these changes are still minimal. For example, adults seeking to complete college degree requirements find very few advanced courses offered in evening or weekend sessions.

Moreover, the emphasis of the entire educational system is still on earning degrees and credentials which are considered terminal. Most people think that a bachelor's degree signals the "completion" of higher education, or that an advanced degree prepares one for a lifetime of professional work. In reality, the "half-life" of knowledge in most fields nowadays is less than ten years: within that period, 50% of what one has learned will be obsolete. Education must, therefore, be spaced throughout life.

It is the intent of Goal 3 to allow adults maximum freedom in the timing of their educational activities based on their individual needs.

Goal #3: The Timing Of Learning In 2000

Adults pursue learning continuously throughout life. The concept of lifelong learning is fully accepted. As a result, credentials, when used, recognize accomplishments to date and not the end of learning. Scheduled learning activities take place at times governed by learners' needs through such arrangements as short-term offerings, modular learning packages and flexible scheduling. Flexibility is the norm, rather than the exception.

Learning is recognized as an integral part of most other life activities. For example, at work, employers provide educational opportunities. Such learning is regularly recognized in educational assessments. At times, periods of study alternate with periods of work. Use of technology further frees adults from time constraints in their pursuit of learning.

IV. BY WHOM: THE PROVIDERS

"We found 614 different learning programs in a 25x25 block square in the center of the city." — A municipal study

Background

There are many and varied adult learning opportunities offered by a wide array of providers including:

- public and private schools
- BOCES
- colleges and universities
- libraries and museums
- unions and employers
- social agencies and community-based organizations
- the media
- learning centers
- producers of learning materials
- informal study groups
- counseling centers
- government agencies
- cooperative extension
- CETA prime sponsors
- churches and synagogues
- the military
- private enterprises
- public and private agencies for the handicapped

Many organizations in this list are what has been characterized as "non-traditional providers." They offer a varied array of learning opportunities, often on subjects and to individuals not covered by traditional providers. Sometimes they compete with traditional providers, sometimes they work closely with them. Because of the increasing need for a highly educated labor force, business and industry are becoming increasingly important providers.

Also, youth-oriented providers are serving adults. For example, some BOCES serve more adults than high school age youth, and colleges and universities are offering a variety of programs for adults, including special programs for women, the elderly and other special groups, and by such special methods as study circles, television and external degrees.

As institutions respond to the needs of adults, there is an expanded and diversified educational marketplace which has advantages and disadvantages of all competitive situations. It stimulates providers to be sensitive to the demands of adult students and to provide an array of services to meet their needs at competitive prices. But competition may also lead to the sacrifice of quality in the interests of survival, to demands for protection of ineffective or unneeded services, and to efforts by institutions to use existing funding mechanisms, both institutional and student aid, for purposes for which they were not designed.

The public's interest is not to favor one type of provider over another but to ensure the maximum possible efficiency in the use and distribution of all resources, public and private. Experience has shown in the adult area both public and private interests are best served generally when there are a multiplicity of providers, each of whom meets certain minimum standards in such matters as adequacy of resources, accuracy in information provided and avoidance of fraud.

There is one area where the multiplicity of providers does not serve the best interests of students or the public and that is in the provision of instruction in core skills. Since it is proposed that opportunities be fully publicly supported, there must be greater public control over the expenditures of funds. Furthermore, to be maximally effective, services need to be available when the student is ready, they need to be offered on a highly individualized basis, and for only so long as it takes for the student to achieve the desired level of competency. This result can best be achieved by having a smaller number of providers with the staffs specifically qualified to help people lacking core skills, and with a financing arrangement that provides strong incentives to both provider and student to accomplish the learning objectives as quickly and effectively as possible.

It is the intent of Goal 4 to encourage a multiplicity of providers in order to match diverse needs with appropriate services, to promote public policies which seek a balance of competition and collaboration, and to provide for core skill instruction by State-authorized providers.

Goal #4: The Providers Of Adult Learning In 2000

A competitive marketplace of educational providers sufficient to meet the needs of individuals and society is ensured through adequate financing of adult learning *(see Goal 8)* and minimum regulation consistent with quality assurance, consumer protection, and accountability for public funds *(see Goal 6)*. Unnecessary duplication of services is minimized primarily through voluntary collaboration among educational and service providers in each community. Collaboration between educational providers, providers of other human services, and business and industry assure that quality services are provided at varied locations and at convenient times. Collaboration is encouraged by public incentives and the recognition of the mutual advantages that responsible collaboration brings.

All providers seek to develop the capacity of adults to direct their own learning and to share their learning with others.

In delivering services, providers employ qualified people, some of whom teach as a profession and have special competence to help adults learn and use all resources, including those made accessible through technology; and some of whom are employed because of competence in their own vocational area or other areas of specialization.

The Board of Regents determines which institutions are eligible for State and Federal funds to provide core skill instruction to persons beyond the age of compulsory school attendance who lack the core skills and choose not to attend their designated public school. Public and private institutions in each region may compete for eligibility, and one or more institutions, depending on community need, may be selected. Selection is based on a variety of factors including the measured achievements of adults who have been previously served by an applicant. There are provisions governing funding of services to promote efficient achievement of intended outcomes. Funding is a shared Federal, State and local school district responsibility *(see Goal 8)*.

Students, in consultation with counselors, may choose among authorized providers.

V. INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE SERVICES: THE MISSING LINK

"Not to choose is to choose." — Proverb

Background

Choosing wisely among learning opportunities is one of the most difficult decisions facing an adult. Most people are unaware of the wide variety of programs and offerings which might meet their needs. Increasingly, education comes in diverse "packages" varying in quality, cost, convenience, style and prestige.

Many adults are not even clear in their own minds on what their needs are. They would benefit from sensitive help in clarifying their life-goals, discovering how they might best use education to achieve some of those goals, and how they like to learn.

Moreover, there are many adults who do not even recognize that education may offer a solution to some of their problems. They may have had a bad experience with their early education, they may be weighed down by the pressing problems of survival, they may have even tried education and not been helped.

As a result, a whole new specialty has emerged recently: "educational brokers." Their job is to "broker" between the needs of the individual adult learner on the one hand, and the myriad of options for meeting those needs, on the other. Brokers help learners determine their needs, reach their goals, and gain access to opportunities.

The State has begun to offer brokering services through the development of Education Information Centers primarily located in public libraries and building on their existing capabilities and resources. EICs play an important role by serving as a neutral source of information about educational opportunities. Through collaborative efforts with all other providers of information and counseling, EICs can help assure that all adults receive the educational services they need when they need them.

It is the intention of Goal 5 to provide for adequate information and guidance services to protect the consumer and maximize adult learner awareness of learning opportunities.

Goal #5: Information And Guidance Services In 2000

Learner-oriented information and guidance services are available at convenient times to assist adults with personal, educational, job, and career planning. Services are well publicized. A State-supported network of education information centers provides certain basic services without charge. The centers and cooperating agencies:

a. Offer services to all individuals in each region at times and locations convenient to all segments of the community.
b. Maintain current information about available educational and support services, including social and job placement services.
c. Create public awareness of the availability of these services.
d. Make special efforts to reach and serve people who do not perceive the need for education as a way to cope with personal problems or who experience special difficulties in gaining access to learning opportunities.
e. Enable learners to make discriminating use of all forms of information about education, including the opinions of other learners about the programs in which they have participated *(see Goal 6)*.
f. Serve as advocates for individuals in relationships with providers.

VI. QUALITY CONTROL: GIVING LEARNERS VALUE

"Lifelong learning could become a popular fraud."
— John Gardner

Background

When education was primarily for children and immature youth, the primary reliance for quality control was on State and local regulation and direction. As adult services developed, they either fell outside of existing regulatory provisions or such provisions were extended and adapted to cover them. Unfortunately, education is not immune to abuses. For example, the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation has warned that "some institutions are awarding inferior degrees based on off-campus study, because they are desperate to pull in tuition income." In New York State, the Education Department has had to take action to prevent abuses or offending institutions. Adults themselves have played only a modest role in quality control, limited largely to "voting with their feet."

The consumer movement has awakened us to the need to assure quality in the marketplace by creating better informed consumers and strengthening consumer protection arrangements. That basic approach applies whether the product is an automobile or a course of instruction. In adult education it is particularly appropriate because a key characteristic of adults - as true in their roles as learners as in any other roles - is that they make their own decisions and take responsibility for the consequences. Quality control arrangements for adult learning services must give due recognition to this fact, while at the same time taking into account that there is a public responsibility to assure accountability for public funds and that consumers have protection from fraud and abuse. The providers themselves and the voluntary associations to which they belong also have an important role in quality control.

Goal 6 provides for an enlarged role for consumers in quality control and defines the respective roles of the State, the providers of services, and others.

Goal #6: Quality Control In 2000

Informed choice by consumers and government regulation are complementary means for assuring quality of providers and their programs. Consumers with full information about programs and services are able to determine which programs and services continue to be offered *(see Goal 5)*. The Board of Regents, the State Education Department, other governmental agencies, service providers and voluntary associations share with adult learners responsibility for quality control as follows:

Adult Learners:

1. Use the information available to make choices about their own learning requirements and the best means to achieve them.
2. In their decisions, examine alternative providers and programs, and weigh carefully the factors that differentiate among alternatives, including the relationship between price and quality.
3. Inform appropriate voluntary and governmental agencies of provider violations of standards or prescribed procedures.

The Board of Regents and the State Education Department:

1. Determine categories of providers subject to regulation, including providers offering substantial programs and those that use public funds or offer credentials recognized by the State.
2. Set minimum standards for achieving acceptable levels of quality and determine which providers meet those standards. Providers that do not meet the minimum standards are not eligible to receive public funds and may be prohibited from operating.
3. Set standards for information to be supplied by all providers and enforces those standards.
4. Obtains data on achievement of institutional objectives and on assessment of provider services including those of voluntary accrediting associations.
5. Establish procedure for systematically obtaining the opinions of learners regarding the courses and programs in which they have participated and make that information available in an appropriate manner to the respective providers and other learners.
6. In cooperation with other governmental agencies, protect consumers against misrepresentation and similar abuses.

Providers:

1. Establish and publish procedures for assuring the quality of their services.
2. Provide prospective students with full information on all matters affecting their educational programs, including financial arrangements.
3. Maintain staffs qualified to perform in accordance with their own stated goals and policies.

Voluntary accrediting and other associations:

1. Assist providers to maintain and improve quality.
2. Inform the public concerning the standards they apply in judging quality.
3. Assist the Education Department and other public agencies in identifying providers that fail to meet the standards of quality.

VII. ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

"It's what you know that counts." — Saying

Background

The real outcomes of education should be knowledge, understanding, skills, values, and strengthened capacities - not merely credits and a credential. Adults are interested in those real outcomes, not just in fulfilling requirements. Employers are interested in what a job applicant can do. *(A recent cartoon portrayed a Personnel Director looking over the resume of a recent graduate, still wearing his cap and gown. The Personnel Director is asking: "What else can you do, beside graduate?")*

There is a need for opportunities that would both encourage and reward real learning, and benefit society by providing evidence to employers and others, of what a person knows, and can do. Such learning should be rewarded with appropriate academic credit or other recognition, if the learner wants or needs it.

New York has made a notable start in this field, through its High School Equivalency and External High School Diploma programs, and through the several ways that the State validated learning wherever and however acquired: the Regents External Degree, the College Proficiency Examination Program, the Credit Bank, and the Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction.

Through the Regents External Degree *(REX)*, anyone can "show what they know" by taking examinations, earning credits and eventually earning a degree. More than 22,000 men and women are currently working toward one of the associate or bachelor's degrees offered, and over 16,000 have graduated. The programs are fully accredited and the degrees are recognized by graduate programs and employers.

The College Proficiency Examinations developed by the State offer anyone the opportunity to earn college credit, advance in the REX program, satisfy New York State teacher certification requirements, and qualify for promotions, salary increases or new jobs. Most colleges and universities in the State, and a growing number in other states, accept the credits.

The Credit Bank is another State-initiated innovation which helps learners get their achievements recognized. Anyone can register with the Bank, and for a modest fee, have all records of their college-level learning evaluated, placed on a master transcript, and provided to any institution or agency, thus providing a consolidated record from different learning experiences - a service particulary valuable to a highly mobile population.

Through these innovations New York State is already pioneering fresh ways to assess adult learning. But only a small proportion of adult learners are served by such programs. For the most part, throughout New York State as in the rest of the country, an individual can obtain recognition of his or her learning by taking classes, accumulating credits, and earning a diploma or degree when sufficient credits have been amassed. Institutions or programs are just beginning to award recognition to learning, demonstrated competency, and instruction received in non-collegiate institutions.

Extension of assessment procedures to all areas of learning will enable individuals to obtain objective evaluations of their learning for use in developing their personal learning plans. Because assessments will be "banked," people will more easily be able to change career directions and draw upon previous accomplishments.

The intent of Goal 7 is to provide appropriate assessment procedures for adult learning.

Goal #7: Assessment Of Learning Outcomes In 2000

Individuals may seek assessment of the results of their learning efforts from specialized assessment agencies at any stage of their educational development. They may use the results to develop their educational and career plans and may make them available to employers when seeking employment or promotion. The agencies use many assessment procedures, not only paper and pencil tests, to determine the kind and level of competencies achieved. The competencies to be measured are developed with the involvement of employers, educators, government and the public, and may be acquired through formal or informal learning or through life experience. Learners may have assessment results recorded in a national credit bank.

Comparable study undertaken anywhere is given comparable recognition by both educational providers and others who use the results of the assessment. For example, degree-granting institutions give credit for comparable work resulting from instruction sponsored by business, labor, the military, schools or community organizations. Credit is always given only for competencies achieved not for experience or participation in a course or other activity.

VIII. FINANCING ADULT LEARNING

Background

When it was first proposed in the 19th century, the idea of public financing for the education of all children and youth seemed radical. But the demonstrable social need gradually convinced the vast majority of Americans that this was a proper, worthwhile, and necessary role for the state. We now take for granted that the education of young people through high school and even college graduation is a responsibility of society which must be met, where necessary, through public funding. In providing that funding, a guiding principle has been that the funding mechanisms would be sensitively adapted to the differing circumstances of the persons being served. Thus, there has been one set of arrangements for funding elementary and secondary education and quite another for postsecondary.

Now, there is a need to adjust the funding arrangements to the special circumstances of adult learners: for example, that they are capable of making decisions for themselves; that most of them are employed and study only part-time; that they undertake study for purposes and under circumstances that do not fit neatly into traditional funding arrangements; and that they have many claims on their resources.

Because of the diversity of learners, providers and alternative financing arrangements, no single simple formula or funding mechanism has been or can be used to cover all circumstances in which public funding is provided. This complexity is unlikely to change in the future. Moreover, since adults and youth do and will continue to share many of the same services and facilities, funding arrangements must be designed to promote equity in the treatment of individuals regardless of age.

Because there are no upper limits on how much one can learn and because there have always been limits to the amount of public resources available for education, limits have been placed on the extent of public support for adult learning. In general, the more education a person has obtained the smaller the proportion of his or her educational costs have been borne by the public except in cases where clear public need for advanced specialized education or training has dictated the necessity for special incentives or support.

In addition, there has been a growing public readiness to support a broad array of educational and cultural services. In most cases, public funds have subsidized only a portion of the costs of delivery of service with the balance being covered by user fees. However, in a few cases, the importance of universal access or the difficulty of charging user fees, has led to full public subsidy.

For persons over 21 who lack core skills or a high school diploma, however, there is limited prospect for public funding. The bulk of the public money available to adult students goes for study leading to a degree or certificate. Only a very small portion of the Federal funds available for all forms of adult learning provides funds for disadvantaged adults.

To rectify this situation, one of the Regents 1981 legislative proposals would authorize school districts to count, for State aid purposes, students over 21 years of age who lack a high school diploma. The intent of this proposal is to take one step toward ensuring that all adults who so desire have access to the opportunities necessary to achieve a high school diploma or equivalent *(which today is accepted as a measure of attainment of the core skills)*. It is anticipated that, in the future, conditions will require periodic modification of the definition of core skills. It is hoped that most individuals will have attained them by the time they reach adulthood, but provision will continue to be needed for those who do not.

Part-time adult college students also have less access to financial aid than do full-time students. The State's Tuition Assistance Program *(TAP)* is available only to full-time degree students. *(A current Regents legislative proposal would extend such aid to students studying half-time or more.)* Federal student aid programs have also discriminated against independent and part-time students. As the Federal government reassesses its role and that of the states in the financing of all education, there will be an opportunity to consider the needs of adult learners in whatever new arrangements evolve.

The capacity of the State to take on additional educational responsibilities will depend in large part on its economy. Therefore, revitalization of human resources is one of the State's most urgent needs. We cannot wait for today's youth to mature. Adults now in the work force or who might be brought in, must be given the education and training to work with new technologies and in new service businesses.

Because the mix of private and public benefits are different depending upon whether the purpose of the education or training is for job entry, retraining or upgrading, different mixes of institutional aid, need and non-need-based student aid, and tax incentives are required. Another of the Regents legislative proposals moves in this direction. The future will demand increased public concern for the learning needs of adult workers.

It is the intent of Goal 8 to define the circumstances under which public funding for adult learning should be provided. An addendum provides specific proposals for implementing the Goal.

Goal #8: Financing Adult Learning In 2000

The economic, societal and personal benefits of lifelong learning opportunities are recognized in public policy. Public financing of adult learning is an expansion of the traditional commitment to public support of education for children and youth. It is based on the recognition that there are social benefits in meeting certain adult learning needs. These benefits include assurance that most adults attain competency in the core skills, that there is a trained work force to meet the needs of the State's economy, and that individuals have the education to develop as full human beings and have the capacity to cope with an increasingly complex world.

As a foundation for all forms of adult learning from independent study to formal courses in schools and colleges, the State provides funding to a broad array of institutions and services, including schools, BOCES, colleges, universities, libraries and library systems, museums, radio and television services, information and counseling centers and artistic organizations *(see Goal 6 for provisions determining eligibility)*. Funding levels ensure high quality services to residents in all parts of the State. Such institutional aid is used primarily to build the capacity of institutions to deliver services, promote collaboration and ensure the availability of essential services.

However, because of the public interest in assuring that all adults attain competency in the core skills, certain institutions receive public funds to provide education in these skills free of charge to adults lacking such skills. The Board of Regents determines the standards for core skill competency and the conditions under which funding will be provided. *(See Goal 4)*.

For educational levels beyond the core, adults are generally expected to pay for the services they require either from personal resources or with help from their employers. However, educational funds for which youth are eligible are available to adults on an equitable basis. In addition, because some essential individual and societal learning needs may not be met through private efforts alone, public funds are used to supplement private resources. Such aid is usually provided on the basis of need and is given in a manner that maximizes the freedom of the adult to choose the time, place and circumstances of learning.

Addendum To Goal #8 — Implementation Proposals

Note: The Goals are intended to set directions for the future. To serve that purpose we deliberately tried to avoid making them overly specific or tied too closely to present conditions. However, with respect to financing, most people want to know that would happen if the Goals were implemented and what the long-term commitment of public funds might be. Therefore, we have provided the following alternative financing proposals to show how significant movement toward the Goals might be made in the next few years by building upon and extending existing arrangements.

To implement these proposals will require additional funding. The underlying assumption of the Goal-setting process is that, if there is agreement on the desirability of the conditions we have projected for 2000, modest incremental steps taken each year will enable us to reach the Goals without undue strain on our resources.

Preparation of the Regents Legislative Adult Learning Proposals for 1982 and beyond will be guided by the comments on the following proposals. The proposals are again expressed in the present tense to emphasize their close relationship to the preceding Goals.

1. Core Skills:

Public funds are provided to assure that adults lacking competency in the core skills have access, free of charge, to the education necessary to achieve such competency. Funding for the provision of core skills goes to institutions, not students. Public funding is distributed on a competitive or negotiated basis to promote efficient use of limited dollars. Only institutions eligible to receive public funding are able to compete. *(See Goal 6)*. The competitive process encourages the establishment of consortia among educational and support service providers.

An institution that is selected through the competitive process provides service to individuals in its designated service area. The costs of such services are shared by the State and Federal governments and by the local school district in which each student resides at the time of entry into the program. Only persons beyond the age of compulsory school attendance who have not achieved competency in the core skills are eligible to participate free of charge. A school district's contribution to the costs of the program is limited to its aid ratio share of the actual costs of the program, but the total charge per year per student cannot be greater than the average local expenditure

for secondary school students.* Census data is used to estimate the annual potential demand for services and no district will be obligated for services that exceed that estimated demand.

Tax policies and subsidized employment also serve as incentives to business and industry to provide for on-site education and released time for adults lacking core skills. Education Information Centers receive public funding to provide support services, information and advisement to adults lacking core skills. *(See Goal 5).* Agencies providing core skills may contract for such support services as counseling, transportation and outreach with other agencies such as libraries and community-based organizations.

Financial support for living expenses and other indirect eductional costs, if needed, are provided by third party sources *(employers, social welfare agencies, etc.).*

2. Vocational Skills:

Public funding ensures the availability of needed education and training opportunities in accordance with the following provisions:

1. Entry level education and training:
   a. Public assistance is provided to eligible providers in order to ensure that an adequate infrastructure exists for offering vocational education programs which meet needs of business and industry.
   b. Need-based grants and loans are available to students in order to enable them to pursue vocational educational programs which meet needs of business and industry.
   c. Tax policies are structured to give business and industry incentives to provide entry level education and training or to support students pursuing entry level education and training through other providers.
2. Retraining:
   a. Need-based grants are made available to students in order to enable them to take advantage of retraining opportunities which meet needs of business and industry.
   b. Competive institutional aid is made available to eligible institutions in order to ensure that adequate programs of retraining exist which meet the needs of business and industry.
   c. Tax policies are structured to give business and industry incentives to provide retraining for employees or to support retraining of employees through other providers.
   d. Employers contribute funds to assist in the retraining of their employees.
3. Upgrading:
   a. Non-need-based loans are made available to students seeking upgrading of skills.
   b. Individual students contribute funds toward their own upgrading.
   c. Employers contribute funds to assist in upgrading their employees.

3. Undergraduate Education:

Need-based grants are available to students for full- and part-time studies. Financially independent and part-time students are treated equitably with dependent and full-time students in the needs analysis system used to determine financial aid. Funding formulas for postsecondary institutions take into account the unique needs of adult learners for academic support services.

4. Graduate and Professional Education:

Advanced study in the liberal arts and sciences, generally associated with original research, and advanced professional study building upon a strong foundation in the liberal arts and sciences, is offered at publicly subsidized and independent centers of excellence. Public support for such advanced studies, in the form of institutional and student aid, is related to the quality of the program and the promise of the student. The distribution of public support for advanced studies further reflects current public goals and purposes, such as economic development, the public health or welfare, national defense, or racial and ethnic diversity in positions of leadership.

5. Continuing Education:

Continuing education is supported by user fees and by public and private aid to institutions. Public support is provided to libraries, museums and other organizations to enable them to maintain collections of books, artifacts, and other resources, and to offer informal learning programs. Performing arts organizations and public television and radio are supported to provide educational and cultural programing. State aid is provided on a formula basis to such locally supported institutions as schools, BOCES, community colleges, libraries and museums and is provided through grants for specific programs to them and to institutions that do not have local tax support such as colleges, universities, library systems, community organizations and private sector providers of services.

When services are publicly subsidized, scaled fees or free access assure that persons with limited financial resources can participate.

**For example, if the actual cost of providing a program to an individual is $300 and the aid ratio of the district is 50%, the district would cover $150 of the cost. The balance would come from State and Federal funds.*

CONCLUSION

If the eight Goals are realized, we may find the following changes in our society:

- Learning by adults is recognized, encouraged and supported as a matter of public policy.
- Learning occurs throughout the community at places and times convenient to adult learners.
- Providers of services collaborate to assure a full range of offerings and effective use of resources.
- New learning technologies are widely used at home and at work.
- All who need instruction in the core skills receive it free of charge.
- Information and guidance services are readily available.
- Informed consumer choice assures high quality services from all providers.
- Appropriate recognition for learning is provided, so that however achieved, educational accomplishment can be validated and used for occupational advancement, entry to advanced study, or other purposes.
- Adult learners and the private sector provide most of the support for learning opportunities.
- Public funding plays a key role in assuring the availability of learning services and access to them.